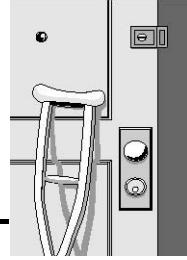


Crime Prevention Tips for the Disabled



*Crime and Violence Prevention Center * California Attorney General's Office*

Disabled persons face many physical challenges. This could make them vulnerable to would-be assailants who assume the disabled are incapable of protecting themselves.

If you are a disabled person, or know someone who is, the following information may be helpful. Take time to read and remember these tips, and you may be able to prevent yourself or a friend from becoming a victim of a crime.

General Crime Prevention Tips

- Know and avoid situations and locations that could invite crime, i.e., dark alleys, unlit parking lots, etc.
- Decide what you plan to do in the event you are confronted, i.e., show confidence; scream, etc.
- Consider your options in these situations and practice your responses often so that you can recall them in a real situation.

Home Security Tips

- Consider having a peephole installed in your doors. Make sure you have the proper locks on doors and windows and use them while you are at home as well as when you are out.
- Never open the door for a stranger. Always demand verification of the stranger's identity and the purpose of the visit.
- Never tell a stranger calling by phone that you are alone or that you are disabled.
- Plan an avenue of escape from each room in your residence to use in case of emergency, such as a break-in or a disaster.

Consumer Protection Tips

- Always ask for identification from all solicitors and call their agency for verification.
- Don't commit yourself to purchases or charitable donations over the phone. Ask the caller to mail the information to you so you can make an informed decision. If you are not familiar with the company or organization, consult the State Department of Consumer Affairs or the Better Business Bureau.
- Be sure to read and understand all contracts before you sign them. If your sight is impaired, have someone you trust read the entire document to you.
- Beware of anyone who is offering products or services as a "once in a lifetime" offer.
- Consider having your checks mailed directly to your bank to avoid mail theft or robbery.

Travel Safety

- Whenever possible, travel with someone you know. There is safety in numbers.
- Leave word of your plans with family or friends — including your ultimate destination and estimated time of return.
- When waiting for a bus, train, etc., wait in a centralized location near other passengers.
- Keep your handbags and packages on your lap instead of on the floor or on the seat next to you.
- Consider using travelers checks instead of carrying cash.
- Be aware of those around you, particularly when exiting a bus or train.
- If you have a speech or hearing impairment, always carry a card of communication symbols.

If You Become a Victim of a Crime...

- Get help immediately by calling: -the police department -a doctor -the sheriff's department -a friend -a relative
- Try to remember as many details about the assailant as possible, such as clothing, hair color, identifiable marks, etc.
- Be certain not to destroy any possible evidence.

